

Representatives Johnson, Miller, Srinivasan. Senators Gerratana, Slossberg, Welch. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in favor of H.B. No. 5738 AN ACT REQUIRING NURSING HOME FACILITIES TO PROVIDE INFORMATION CONCERNING SAFETY INCIDENTS TO PATIENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES.

My name is Angela Picard the daughter of Salvatore Ruotolo, Jr., who once resided in one of our privately owned Connecticut nursing homes.

I cannot express the importance of this proposed bill. The information it would make available is something my father, sisters, and I could have used. This would have been a helpful tool when we were faced with the news of his status, changing from a short term to then a long term patient. It would have helped us to make a more informed decision as to whether we should keep him where he was or to seek out another option.

Knowing the safety incidents which had occurred at that particular facility for the two years previous to his arrival would absolutely have been a red flag. We too found ourselves in similar situations experienced by patients already at this facility and never knew of these happenings.

Making this Amendment to our current State Statute would not only bring public awareness, but it would also force both out State and private institutions to say "this is who we are." And if they are not proud of the results of their inspections, then hopefully they will be forced to strive for a safer environment for the elderly.

My sisters and I were not aware of these inspections or of its results. We had no idea of what a CMS report was or what a health inspection looked like. It was only after our father's painful death and our request to have an investigation, did we learn of such reports. To our dismay, we also learned that during the investigation of our dad's care at this facility, they also found other safety incidents with other patients. When I received the investigation report from Karen Gworek, DPH, I telephoned her and asked if the other patient's families were made aware of such incidents, and were they given a copy of the inspection report as well, I was told no. Ms. Gworek told me the only reason I was sent the inspection report was because I was the one who requested the investigation.

After my father's death and over the last four years I began to ask clients, friends, other family members and anyone I met who had a loved one in a nursing facility if they knew what a CMS report was. Did they know that there are annual inspections done? And, did they know how to access such reports? All answers were "NO". Numerous times I used Google to try and find nursing home inspection reports in many different ways with no success.

Having such information placed on a bulletin board is just not good enough. Having patients and families left to find this information on their own is just not good enough. This information should be made available by the nursing homes and all chronic disease hospitals to the patients and families upon admission.

Our elderly are our most vulnerable. Having easy access to these reports and knowing how to obtain them could only improve the safety, wellbeing and protection of our elderly.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify and I would be happy to answer any questions.

